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ABSTRACT

The value system of a school is a major factor affecting the teacher's working conditions, but public discourse on educational reform tends to avoid serious discussion of the most deeply embedded values in our educational system. This absence of serious reflection on values limits consideration of alternatives for improving both education and the quality of work in schools. Accordingly, this paper draws on personal involvement with the International School Improvement Project and on literature reviews to explore, in a cross-cultural context, some of the ways in which basic cultural values, professional values, and community values may affect the lives of teachers. The section on cultural values discusses and compares norms of homo/heterogeneity among schools, attitudes toward parental values and choice, and views of stability and change. The section on professional values discusses and compares the view of the teacher and the view of the school leader in various countries. The section on community values begins with a definition of value-cohesive and value-fragmented communities, and then discusses the effect of community cohesiveness or fragmentation on teachers. A discussion follows of the way in which value issues are framed in communities characterized by coalitions or those characterized by interest groups. The role of values in determining educational structures and functions in various cultures has implications for policy and practice, which are discussed in the conclusion. Notes and a bibliography are included. (TE)

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SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY VALUES AND THE QUALITY OF TEACHER WORK LIFE [1]

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INTRODUCTION

Values and Teachers' Work

Current discussions about how to improve the teachers' lot tend to center on either structure (how to reorganize schools or the profession to bring about desired results) or people (how to change or motivate people in the system so that they will be more able to bring about desired results). In this paper, I will raise a different set of issues, and argue that before we debate what to do, or to whom it should be done, we need to relate discussions about teacher's work to a broader discussion of our educational value system. This paper is premised on two assumptions:

First, the value system that surrounds a school is a major factor affecting the teacher's working conditions, and the way in which they evaluate those conditions. Values can have direct, visible effect, e.g., may provide a specific set of constraints or opportunities for teacher action. They may also have important "invisible effect", in that they condition broader strategies for structuring and improving schools, and thus affect teachers.

Second, although public discourse about educational reform usually touches directly on values, the most deeply embedded values are rarely discussed. This is because they are viewed as given or basic assumptions

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rather than as issues for debate. However, the absence serious reflection on values limits our consideration of alternatives for improving both education and the quality of work in schools.

Looking at the way in which values affect the nature of school improvement strategies three different categories seem to have a particularly strong effect:

- o basic cultural values that are central to most citizen's views of how school "ought" to work;
- o professional values that govern educator's views about how schools ought to be internally structured and how the people who work in them ought to relate to one another; and
- o community values, which are the specific expectations and demands that emerge from the specific community settings in which teachers find themselves.

This paper will explore some of the ways in which values at these three levels may affect the lives of teachers. It is not a report of a single research project, but rather is based on a variety of data sources.

The use of comparative data is particularly useful in illuminating the value system that pervades our own country. Thus, in discussing the first two types of values I draw upon three years of involvement in a collaborative research effort, known as the International School Improvement Project, which involved more than a hundred individuals from fourteen developed countries.[2] This project was, of necessity, centrally concerned with basic educational values: in an cross-cultural setting, no discussion of action could be conducted without running into conflicting assumptions about how or why a given action will affect the educational process and its outcomes.

> "a school improvement policy nearly always involves normative changes: it concerns better education, a change in teacher behavior, the improvement of learning practice, etc. This implies a value-oriented choice." (van Velzen, et al, 1985:232)

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The I.S.I.P. project does not provide a rigorous data base that directly addresses the question of values, but the values reviewed here were drawn from case studies written by participating researchers, checked with various countries whose values are discussed, and reviewed at an international conference.

Discussion of the role of community values is based on a general review of the literature, and on recently completed case studies (Lightfoot, 1984; Perrone, 1985; Louis and Miles, forthcoming) that illustrate quality of work life issues.

The Quality of Teachers' Work Life: A Framework

A review of relevant quality of work life constructs in the general literature (which is based on primarily studies of industry) suggests six criteria particularly relevant to teachers and schools:[3]

- participation in decision making that augments the teachers' sense of influence or control over their work setting (Firestone, 1988; Sickler, 1988; Cohn, et al, 1987);
- frequent and stimulating professional interaction among peers (e.g. collaborative work/collegial relationships) within the school (Little, 1984; Miles, et al, 1986);
- opportunity to make full use of existing skills and knowledge, and to acquire new skills and knowledge (self-development); the opportunity to experiment (Sederberg and Clark, 1987; Newmann and Rutter, 1987)
- structures and processes that contribute to a high sense of efficacy and relevance (e.g., mechanisms that permit teachers to obtain frequent and accurate positive and negative feedback about the specific effects of their performance on student learning) (Rosenholtz, 1985);
- adequate resources to carry out the job; a pleasant physical working environment (Cohn, et al, 1987; Public School Forum of North Carolina, 1987);
- a sense of congruence between personal goals and the school's goals (low alienation) (Cohn, et al. 1987; Louis and Miles, forthcoming).

- o respect and status in the larger community (Sederberg and Clark, 1987; NEA, 1988)

Although all of these theoretically contribute to TQWL, they are not equally important. Research on quality of work life among a variety of occupations suggests that the most critical factor is likely to be social respect and status (Kahn, 1974) The availability of "adequate resources and a pleasant physical environment" is likely to be important primarily when they are absent. Increasing resources beyond some level of perceived adequacy is unlikely to have a big impact on TQWL.[4] This is, we believe, also likely to be true for the opportunity to use/develop new skills. In this case, more is not always better: too much involvement in innovation may be perceived as an unreasonable overload, detracting from performance of more important tasks (Cohn, et al., 1987). Others are simply less problematic for most teachers: alienation (as we have defined it) is likely to be lower for teachers than for factory workers, largely because teachers are often drawn to their jobs for idealistic reasons.

On the other hand, three of the TQWL indicators appear to us to be different: the more the teacher experiences them, the higher their perceived quality of work life is likely to be. These include the opportunity to influence the immediate conditions of work, the opportunity to engage in meaningful collaborative work that is directly related to improving their classroom performance and student learning, and increases in their ability to know and understand the relationship between what they do in the classroom, and student performance.[5]

VALUES AND TEACHER'S WORK LIFE

Broad Cultural Values and TQWL

Goodlad (1984) has remarked on the dull uniformity of American schools.

Equally striking is the superficial similarity of schools in different countries. Basic grade structures are organized into elementary, lower secondary and upper secondary; major curriculum areas and instructional approaches are similar; the model of one teacher working with 25-40 students in a self-contained classroom also predominates. But, as many informal and formal observations have indicated, these similarities are somewhat deceiving.

One area that affects the teacher's sense of "real school" (Metz, 1988) is the dominant public definition of what quality education is like, what aspects of education are most in need of improvement, and what a "good school" would look like, and these vary widely between countries. To give just one example, the U.S. visitor to the Scandinavian countries would be surprised at the relatively low level of policy and public interest in minimum achievement standards--or in testing achievement levels at all--just as the typical Scandinavian or visitor to the U.S. would find the level of current attention to matters of student socio-emotional development in junior high and middle schools surprisingly low. This section does not attempt to analyze all basic cultural values that may affect teacher's work lives, but concentrates of a limited number that have significant implications for how schools and teacher's work are structured.

HOMO/HETEROGENEITY: In comparative educational research, much is often made about the distinction between educational systems that are structurally - centralized and decentralized. There are trends in most of the developed countries--even those that are traditionally more centralized--toward policies that put more responsibility directly within the purview of the school. Both Sweden and France, for example, have recently attempted significant new

policies to decentralize some curriculum improvement away from the national ministries, and to give more responsibility to local authorities and schools (Wallin and Hamber, 1988; Care, 1986). In the U.S., the revised Chapter 1 policy initiative has given schools and school systems much more influence over how federal monies for education are spent, and quite a few states have developed their own improvement programs that are focused on the school level (Berman, 1985; Neufeld, 1985; Anderson, et al, 1987). On the other hand, in other countries there are also strains toward greater centralization. The Netherlands, for example, has recently legislated a common curriculum for its junior secondary schools, which were previously free to set their own curriculum (WRR, 1987). Not surprisingly, these changes produce heated debates. Thus, there is no argument that the question of centralization has a place in debates over school policy.

But, if we are concerned with understanding different implicit assumptions that affect teachers' work, a more important distinction is the degree to which schools (and the people in them) are normatively viewed as homogeneous (very similar across different units, and in different parts of the country) or heterogeneous (different between schools; often coupled with the ability of parents to choose schools).

To give an example: The Swiss have traditionally had a strong preference for homogeneous education, at least at the elementary level, although their system is rather decentralized (Huberman, 1988). In most cantons identical curricula are used in each school, including in some cases, uniform texts and materials. Teachers are not viewed as employees of a school, but of the cantonal educational system. School improvement, with the exception of a very small pilot program (Huberman, 1984), has tended to be seen by cantonal

authorities as synonymous with curriculum review and revision.

In sharp contrast, the Netherlands appears on the surface to be considerably more centralized than Switzerland (van den Berg and van Wijlijk, forthcoming). There is a large national ministry, much discussion of national reforms, and a proportion of all secondary schools report directly to the national ministry. Yet the norms, embodied in the constitution and in educational codes, encourage wide diversity because of the full funding of private education, and the relatively limited role than the state or region plays in the regulation of private education.

The implications of homo-heterogeneity for teachers' work life is not a simple matter. On the one hand, a homogeneous school system tends to have well specified expectations, which permit teachers to better assess how they--and their students--are doing compared to other similar students. This can improve the teacher's sense of efficacy. On the other, a heterogeneous educational system may provide greater rewards for teachers who innovate, try out new ideas or use their skills more broadly--in other words, promote heterogeneity within and between schools.

Another implication of the homo-hetero distinction for teachers' work concerns the availability and type of support for improving their own performance. This can be illustrated by contrasting the way in which governments try to reform schools and teaching. In Switzerland (and in other relatively homogeneous systems) educational improvement usually focuses primarily on curriculum development (in which representative teachers usually participate in cantonal committees) and not on organizational or individual development. There is typically more emphasis on <u>content</u> than <u>instruction</u>. In contrast, in the heterogeneous Netherlands, there is a long tradition of

helping schools and teachers to deal with their individual issues and needs, and a broad system of school support agencies (the equivalent of five or more of our regional laboratories to serve a population the size of the greater New York metropolitan area) that is generously funded to serve all public and private schools. A major purpose of this system (from the government's perspective) is to persuade schools and teachers, particularly in those in the private sector, to go along with national reforms (Jansen and Mertens, 1988). However, the main consequence from the teacher and school's point of view is the availability of tailored help to develop and work out their own school plans.

In the United States, public opinion has formally supported heterogeneity, but more in theory than in practice. More recently an underlying preference for homogeneity has become apparent: the most frequent response to the current "crisis in education" has been to standardize curricula, performance criteria, testing programs, etc. within states and districts rather than to experiment and maximize the search for different options. Standardization is coupled with efforts to increase "accountability" to externally developed measures of educational performance. Interest in working with individual teachers to develop alternative educational models seems to be declining, and public officials talk more about the curriculum/content than about instructional practices.

The implications for overall quality of work life are not yet clear. However, we hypothesize that, if satisfaction with clear expectations and feedback increases, there will nevertheless be a simultaneous decrease in teachers' sense that their jobs provide them with the flexibility to use all of their skills and to experiment. Teachers who have come to expect that

their career would include a large measure of self-development work may find difficulty adjusting to a system in which experimentation with new skills is less valued than performance within a stricter operations protocol (Lightfoot, 1988).

PARENTAL VALUES AND CHOICE: Intertwined with the homogeneity-heterogeneity issue is the question of how parental values are (or are not) integrated into the school's curriculum. Do parents expect their own values to be reflected in the schools, and, if so, do they expect to be able to make choices between schools? This basic question reflects the degree to which schools are expected to be responsive to community and social interests that do not overlap with a geographic area.

In Great Britain, for example, some heterogeneity is valued: schools are relatively autonomous and are therefore expected to vary between local communities, and sometimes within communities. In addition, religious private education (Church of England) is partially subsidized. For most parents, however, the choice of which school their child attends is usually determined by where they live (and, in upper forms, by examination results). Thus, much attention is often paid to the selection of community residence, or even geographic areas within communities since it is only in this way that parents may "choose" without playing high fees for private schools. In contrast, in the Netherlands and Belgium parents may choose the school that they wish for their child, whether it is public or private, and much attention is devoted in local newspapers to coverage of the opportunities for and process of choice.[6] These choices tend to be made on the basis of perceived educational quality, the climate of the school, and the frequency of communication with parents (proximity is also a major factor for elementary children) (Sociaal Cultureel

Plan Bureau, 1982).

The implications of choice for teachers are enormous. A preliminary look at the various countries suggests that, where parent choice is perceived to be permitted, public support of teachers and schools is higher. In the Netherlands, parents believe that the school reflects their own values, and are generally contented with the teachers. Since teachers are usually employed in a school whose religious or other pedagogical preference is compatible with their own, this sense of shared values is mutual. In Great Britain, in contrast, confidence in public education appears relatively lower, parental dissatisfaction and conflict with schools and teachers is more similar to that which we observe in the U.S., and the social status of teachers (in terms of public confidence as well as salaries) is believed to be eroding.

In the U.S., there appear to be deeply embedded suspicions about choice, which is often viewed by researchers, politicians and others as a potential threat to the Constitution, an attack upon the obligations of the state to preserve the interests of children (Moshman, 1985), or a threat to equality of educational opportunity. As a consequence, choice experiments in the U.S. have been limited to options within the public school system--and even these have not been strongly supported by the teacher unions. who are concerned that choice may decrease teacher control over assignments, evaluation and other matters.

Nevertheless, cities that have experimented with magnet, options or alternative programs have found that teachers benefit. Teachers are pleased with the increased control that they have over their own work in setting where both they and parents have the ability to choose a specific educational

program (Reywid, 1985).[7] Furthermore, some choice programs (magnet schools) have been found to increase parent and general local support for education, thus producing a generalized sense of respect and support for teachers. Blank, et al (1983) report that teachers repórt that students in magnet schools are more motivated, and that the opportunities to teach and use their special skills are more frequent than in "regular" non-choice schools.[8] Here is a clear-cut case in which our value system has prevented a full discussion of policies and structures that may benefit teachers.

STABILITY VERSUS CHANGE: Countries vary a great deal in the degree to which the general population views change is education as generally a sign of health, or with general suspicion. In Switzerland and in France, for example, the general population has relatively conservative views about change:

> One changes the part when the part breaks; if it's not broken--and the Swiss are wizards for maintenance--one doesn't fix it. The notion of change as a vehicle for reducing the gap between stated objectives and ongoing practice is an esoteric one in the social sector. In a sense, good maintenance of whatever is now in service is the overriding objective. If a school system needs "reform" there is a subterranean suspicion that it has been poorly maintained...(Huberman, 1988, p. ?)

> ...in France, the educational system has always been considered as an institution of national (cultural) preservation. This function of preservation and stability is to be encountered both in the vocabulary used and in deep-seated mentalities. In its institutional capacity, national education tends to act as a brake...(Care, 1984, p. 42)

At the other extreme, perhaps, lie Denmark and the Netherlands, where change and movement are viewed almost as necessary signals that the patient is alive (Olsen, forthcoming; van den Berg and Wijlijk, forthcoming). Being innovative--looking for new educations models--is a sign that parents often look for in a school--even where the movement is "back to the basics..".

Other countries fall in the middle. In Japan, for example, there is high cultural value placed on constant group assessment and improvement. This does not always mean invention, however, but often small-scale, incremental change within school practice (Bollen, 1987).

The U.S. clearly belongs among the change-valuing countries. What are the implications for teachers' work? The demand for change and innovation is also a demand for energy. Change that is imposed from outside may conflict with the teacher's own deeply embedded ideas of how "real school" should operate, and cause considerable personal confusion as needed adjustments take place. Burnout or stress may be more of a problem. The need for reflectiveness may also be higher, as teachers are asked to grapple with new instructional practices, or innovations such as "reading in the content areas". As innovations come and go, teachers may also become disillusioned about the possibilities of enduring results from their investment in their performance and improvement of education.

The degree to which teachers are embedded in a support structure may also vary: countries that are more change-oriented also tend to have invested in a variety of structures outside of the school that are intended to prod, support, or otherwise ensure that teaching will be responsive to the change imperative. In the Netherlands, the demand on schools for improvement and change has reinforced the perceived need for a very extensive network of support agencies, as noted above. In countries with a relatively low press for change there tends either to be no formal system to provide help for teachers in improving and changing (Sweden and the Federal Republic of Germany) or one that is oriented primarily to subject-matter inservice (Switzerland, France).

In the U.S., we have tended to view the district office as the major source of support for change. Whether district offices actually function in this way for individual teachers and schools is, however, highly questionable. As Farrar (1987) has indicated, despite good intentions urban districts often serves more as a constraint and brake rather than a support for innovative teachers. Other research suggests that district office staff rarely communicate with teachers at all, even when they have information relevant to the improvement of classroom practice (Louis, et al, 1984).

Professional values

Professional values are those which are of greatest concern to those who live and work inside of schools. Although these value questions may occasionally be discussed by non-educators, for the most part they are not within the arena of either general or political debates. The term professional values should not be confused with professional or teacher control. In fact, at least in the United States, the professional values to be discussed below have been formulated in schools of education and educational bureaucracies, and not from the collective consciousness of teachers.

THE VIEW OF THE TEACHER varies widely between countries, and appears to be extremely important for the ways in which schools function, and how teachers perceive of their own roles. The main questions are:

> -- is the practice of teaching largely a scientifically or artistically based activity? In other words, is easily possible to anticipate, classify and understand the general problems that will be faced by teachers at work, and to codify a range of solutions to them or, conversely, is it more likely that teachers will face a hugh range of unanalyzable problems that they must creatively solve on-the-job?
>
> -- Is the teacher viewed primarily as an autonomous

> professional, or as a member of a collective body? (This is, of course, a relative view since almost all teachers have relatively high levels of autonomy while they are actually interacting with students)

These assumptions about teachers will vary between primary and secondary school, but for the present discussion we will ignore this distinction and focus on the case of the primary school.

Let us look, for example, at the case of Denmark, which has traditionally emphasized two characteristics of teachers: their collective responsibility in carrying out their job and their special craft knowledge. Local schools, e.g. teachers, are responsible for designing a curriculum plan within very general government expectations. The fact that teachers are assigned to follow the same group of students from grades 1 through 10 (except, of course, for specialized subject matters in secondary school) is evidence that the craft and personal knowledge that they build up with the group conditions the types of behaviors that they will choose, not a set of "scientific" principles of teaching. A corollary assumption of the above is that only teachers can decide what they need to know in order to improve. At a logical extreme, it is assumed that teachers, rather than policy makers, professors or inservice experts, should be responsible for the design of improvement efforts (Anderson and Olsen, 1985). Although Olsen (1988) indicates that teacher-designed improvement strategies have not always been successful, this is nevertheless still an objective toward which the system strives.

This stands in strong contrast with France, where teaching is viewed as highly analyzable (e.g., it can be taught to any suitably qualified person) and teacher autonomy outside of the classroom, as well as within, is protected by civil service and union regulations (the most senior secondary school teachers are only required to be in the school for approximately 15 hours a

week). As Care (1986) notes, under these circumstances there are strong constraints on what may be required of teachers (largely limited to technical changes in content), even though the system is officially very centralized.

Japan stands between these two extremes. Cultural traditions support a view of teachers as good technical experts, imbued with strong norms of collective professional behavior. The response of teachers to a perceived need for improvement in the school is often to voluntarily form a study group, which may meet after school or on Saturdays!

The U. S. is less collective in its orientation than Japan or Denmark, but more so than France (see also Hofstede, 1984). This modestly collective orientation means that it is relatively easy to generate interest in getting teachers to work in groups, thus increasing the possibility of satisfying professional collaboration. On the other hand, because the school is not unambiguously viewed as a unit of collaborative self-management, it has been difficult to sustain the administrative enthusiasm and resources for structuring schools to permit teachers more opportunities to work together: collaboration is "nice but not absolutely necessary".

This ambivalence about teachers' collective role emerges, in part, from the tendency on the part of the U.S. educational establishment to view teachers from the scientific rather than the artistic model, but within that framework, to view them more as lab technicians than principal investigators. This is probably a consequence of the development of strong administrative-management ideologies described by Tyack (1974), and the subsequent efforts on the part of curriculum developers to professionalize, distance themselves from teachers, and to create curricula and materials that are "teacher proof".

Lightfoot (1988) argues that this conflicting set of values in the U.S.

may have real consequences for the support of superior teaching--at least within our cultural context. Drawing on her data from "good high schools", she argues that maintaining enthusiasm for and commitment to teaching over the life cycle depends on a delicate balance between respect for artistry and autonomy within the classroom, coupled with an enduring sense of connectedness to the school as a whole.

VIEW OF THE SCHOOL LEADER: School leaders exist in every country (except in many primary schools in Switzerland), but their roles vary enormously.[9] In many countries--for example, Japan and Great Britain--teachers and others in the educational system view the head as the most powerful actor in the system: they have the authority to control virtually everything that goes on in the school, from the specifications of curriculum to the disposition of all cases of teacher assignments that are not specifically covered by union contract (Birchenough, et al., Arai, et al, 1986). In other countries, leaders are powerful, but only in a more constrained arena. In France, for example, school leaders are the official interpreters of government regulations within the school. However, both custom and union contracts limit their ability to evaluate teachers, to make suggestions about teaching practice, or even to call staff meetings to discuss school improvement issues (Care, 1986). Finally, in some countries, the school leader might be better thought of as a "first among equals", or as the "head of the team". In Sweden, for example, the leader is often responsible for several buildings, and must, therefore, delegate substantial responsibilities to others within the staff (Stego, 1986).

The U.S. operates with a weak-but-strong principal model. Verbal value is given to principal control within the building, but in practice this value

has been subordinated to district policies, and, in some cases, teacher contract agreements (Farrar, 1987). The increasingly ambiguous role of principals as leaders (as compared with other countries) may contribute to a relative leadership vacuum at the building level, as well as role strain for the principal. Recent calls for "principal leadership" do not address the structural and value constraints that do not necessarily promote principals with strong leadership potential, or encourage the development and exercise of leadership once in office. It is, of course, too early to assess the results of school-based management programs on the principal's role.

For teachers, the weak-but-strong principal role increases the ambiguity of the work environment. Unlike countries with weak school leaders, teachers rarely feel that they have control--either individual or collectively--over many of their immediate work conditions--at least those outside of the classroom. Unlike countries with strong school leader models, they rarely feel that the principal can provide them with the kind of support, encouragement, and feedback that could occur if the principal had real authority over the building and staff.

Community Values

In recent years, research related to the effects of community on teachers has often emphasized structural differences in school district size and organization (Samuels, 1974), or the need for parent involvement (Lightfoot, 1978; Epstein, 1985; Leichter, 1978). While these are both important in terms of Teacher Quality of Work Life, they do not tell the whole story. In fact, both are likely to be a result of broader community issues.

There are many definitions of community. For simplicity's sake, I will adopt Hunter's (1975) three-fold classification of a community as a: (1)

functional spatial unit; (2) patterned social interaction; (3) cultural-symbolic unit of collective identity.

VALUE COHESIVE VS. VALUE FRAGMENTED: In a cohesive community context, all three definitions of community coincide. The impacts of cohesiveness on the educational experience are vividly described by Cremin (1978), in his analysis of early New England:

> The close linkages between families, between families and schools and between families and the congregations and politics into which they were organized go far in explaining the educative basis and power of the colonial New England community. It was not merely a matter of spatial arrangement, of close physical proximity...it was also a matter of timing...a dense collective experience...communal life itself becomes educative, with social institutions complementary and mutually supportive of a particular version of character (Cremin: 689).

While it is rare to find communities where the value cohesiveness is as dense as noted above, there is still variation in modern community settings. For example, in relatively homogeneous suburban towns and in rural areas we may find an approximation of overlapping value communities discussed above. Coleman (1987) claims that contemporary parochial schools recreate, in miniature, the "social capital" implicit in the above description.

The opposite situation exists in a fragmented community: the three different types of community don't overlap at all. Tyack (1974) refers to the educational consequences of this as "the corporate model" of education, in which education becomes more exclusively the purview of professionals, where there is distance between school values and family values, where there is an emphasis on standardizing education, irrespective of the community values and needs, and where the school is seen as a "compensatory institution", providing children with experiences and skills that were lacking in the general community and family.

This corporate model may be to some extent reflective of all contemporary American education, but again it varies a great deal between different spatial and social settings. Value fragmentation may be most characteristic of urban school systems, in which students are drawn from a wide and non-contiguous geographic area, from many ethnic groups and religious backgrounds, and in which there is little consensus over the values that should be part of the educational experience. Peachy (1967) calls these "delocalizing" communities.

The impact of cohesiveness/fragmentation on teachers occurs at a variety of levels. Value fragmentation clearly increases professional autonomy for teachers, and increases professional and occupational identification. We need only contrast the situation of the school teacher described in Elmstown's Youth, (Hollingshead, 194) where dress and behavior outside of school were of deep concern to the citizenry, with the urban school teacher, whose life outside of school hours takes place in what is both figuratively and usually literally another community.

But value fragmentation also increases the dependance of teacher on their students. In a value fragmented setting, teachers lack appreciative, adult "audiences" who will provide them with positive feedback about their work. Their ability to depend on adults outside the school to reinforce the messages that they deliver is also diminished, often producing a sense of moral isolation. In the worst case, teachers are locked into a situation where the only source of feedback about performance is a group of students whose values they do not understand, and whose in-school performance they believe to be unsupported in all of the community contexts that they encounter outside of school, which fosters a sense of the meaningless of their work

(Hemming, 1988). As Lightfoot (1978) points out "The greater the difference between family and community culture and school norms, the greater the need for parents and teachers to work hard at knowing one another (p 189). But, in a deeply fragmented community, the task becomes even more difficult, because finding and defining the community with whom one should work is difficult.

Educators often view families as the intractable source of this problem. Yet, in recent studies of urban high schools, it is not impossible to find schools and teachers who have begun to create solidary communities in very unpromising settings (Lightfoot, 1984 and 1988; Louis and Cipollone, 1986). As Epstein's (1984) work indicates, it is to a large extent the teacher's effort and interest that pulls parents into schools rather than the parent's status. Furthermore, active effort can pay off in terms of status and relevance: "teachers who worked at parent involvement were considered better teachers than those who remained more isolated from the families of the children they taught" (Epstein, 1984: 21).

COALITION VS. INTEREST GROUP COMMUNITIES: Ravich (1974) describes the evolution of the New York City school system as the product of competing interest groups, each of which is eager to seize control of the schools to increase their power. The main issue suggested by her analysis is not that coalitions produce conflict between school and community: school-community conflicts exist periodically in all settings--even those that are value-cohesive. The issue is the way in which the value issues are framed.

In both cohesive and fragmented communities, conflicts over education that may affect teachers arise as a product of temporary or shifting concerns rather than deeply embedded values. A taxpayer revolt may involve the unlikely alliance of blue collar homeowners and high tech businessmen which

will dissolve after the precipitating events have passed; an outcry over school closings may involve affected neighborhoods, who on other issues may be highly supportive of education; a threatened or actual strike may temporarily divide a community in which parents and teachers are normally close.

The community whose educational politics focuses on semi-permanent coalitions that are bolstered by well articulated, value-laden philosophies, however, provides teachers with a Catch-22 value environment. Teachers and schools are not perceived as "neutral" but as "captives" of one or another coalition, no matter how they behave. As a consequence, there is no way in which teachers can obtain community respect and support from all sectors. Teachers may find themselves drawn to develop closer linkages with the dominant coalition, only to find that school board elections change "ownership", and they are faced with now powerful group that sees them as the opposition. Teachers have been fearful of coalition politics that promote increased community control--e.g., Ocean-Hill Brownsville--and thus have found themselves with a much eroded base of localized public support as a consequence. The risk is that teachers become perceived as an interest group--one that is not sensitive to the needs of <u>any</u> of the other parties to the conflict--which may in turn cause them to act as an interest group in self-protection. The consequence, of course, is that some major segment of the community views teachers, and their values, as part of the "problem", further diminishing teacher's sense of the relevance of their own work.

DISCUSSION

The arguements presented above are not intended to be an entirely academic exercise. If values occupy a central position determining the ways in which our schools function, and help to determine the quality of teacher's

work life, there are important implications for policy making and practice.

Implications for Policy

Almost all policy makers agree that teacher working conditions, including pay, are inadequate and should be improved. Some aspects of the quality of teachers' work life may be altered with little regard for broader cultural and professional values. We may, for example, deal with both the smaller and larger resource problems that make teachers' lives difficult with a simple infusion of targeted dollars for supplies, telephones, etc. To meaningfully raise teacher salaries requires reaching more deeply into the purse, but would represent a critical symbol of our desire to improve their relative status.

Our enacted values suggest, however, that genuinely improving quality of work life in other areas will be difficult or even impossible without more basic changes. A look at value system will help to explain why some past reforms--although known to be beneficial for teachers and students--did not spread or institutionalize except in a small number of places. We can predict that in this current round of attempts to improve education and teaching, other useful reforms may not "stick" if they are caught between conflicting values.

Policy makers should not avoid a responsibility for directly confronting this issue. Value systems are stable but are not entirely fixed, and policy makers play a major role in shaping value discussions. Debates about values may permit adjustments and resolution of differences over time, but these debates are less likely to occur if value issues are not explicitly raised as part of the policy making process, and the relevant parties are not involved. Diagnosis of problems and needs is more thoughtful if values are addressed before policies are fully designed and implemented, not after. This approach

to policy making is more prevalent in some European countries than it is in the U.S., where the development of "constructive educational policies" (those that attempt significant shifts in value systems) evolves over periods of a decade or more.

More importantly, policy makers should be sensitive to the fact that, although they can have an impact on the value system surrounding education, regulation is a blunt instrument for changing values. Values change slowly, and specific policies erode rapidly if they are too disjoint from the dominant values systems at all three levels discussed above. Thus, if policy makers wish to make a real impact on teachers' work, their own efficacy will be increased if they bring value dimensions into higher levels of public scrutiny.

Implications for Practice

Teacher quality of work life will never really improve without a broad value consensus that supports education and teachers. The most critical aspect of QWL is relevance and status. Status can be addressed, in part, through technical policies, such as raising salaries, etc. Relevance, however, relies fundamentally on the presence of positive feedback from the various communities that the schools relate to. Educators cannot solve the problems of fragmentation or coalition politics at the community level. But, if they do not view themselves as the most significant actors in an effort to build community around the school, quality of work life will continue to decline.

Teachers unions have increasingly emphasized quality of work life issues that are broader than working conditions such as hall and lunchroom duty, or salary. However, within the union movement itself there are underlying value

conflicts that must be discussed if work quality issues are to be more directly incorporated. For example, Farrar's (1986) description of one urban system's union contract illustrates what can happen to teacher's work when seniority rights (a basic union value) permit senior teachers to choose their preferred school with no constraints: The opportunity to develop stable collaborative relationships is undermined in the "best" schools due to high teacher turnover, and the principal's willingness to support experimentation and skill development among those staff who are likely to transfer or be "bumped" is low. These value conflicts must be discussed, and quality of work life put at the forefront of the union agenda if change is to occur.

Endnotes

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2. This project was funded and coordinated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

3. A number of constructs in the general literature seem less relevant to teachers. For example, we assumed that work induced disease and accidents, benefits, and economic security do not currently vary enough between different district settings to account for major variations in quality of work life. The preliminary research on career ladders does not indicate that these will have a strong effect on the typical teacher's job satisfaction, although they may have other desirable effects (Hart, 1987; Sederberg and Clark, 1987). We have therefore not included promotion structures as a key aspect. In addition, many QWL frameworks emphasize extra-work activities as an aspect of QWL. We prefer to view this as an exogenous variable that may be related to QWL but is not part of it.

4. For example, some recent discussions have suggested that the availability of telephones is a real issue for many teachers. We hypothesize, however, that teachers would be satisfied if they had access to a reasonably private place in which to make phone calls, with a ratio of teachers to phones that

would permit access when they needed it would make a significant difference; giving each teacher a telephone is likely to be overkill. The basic theoretical assumption is that the absence of this factor is a major stress factors for teachers.

5. It is also important to note that the latter three may imply the most significant restructuring efforts inside the school. Resources may be added, teachers may be encouraged to innovate, and may be provided with more discretionary inservice and staff development money, and intrinsically motivated teachers may be recruited without making significant changes in the organization of the school day, the teaching of students, and the working relationships among the majority of staff. Changing the conditions of collaborative work, sense of efficacy, and the array of decisions that teachers may control involve more significant rearranging of schedules, evaluation and performance feedback systems, use of teacher time, and the relationship between schools and districts as well as administrators and teachers.

6. Student choices are made primarily by parents, but are, of course, affected by examination scores at the secondary level.

7. Teacher satisfaction is higher in "whole school" options or alternatives, rather than schools-within-schools, primarily due to higher levels of staff friction in the latter (Rand, 1981).

8. Metz' (1986) study of magnet schools indicates that teacher involvement and empowerment in the design of the schools will affect the benefits that they derive.

9. These variations are probably related to broader cultural values about work and work relationships. See Hofstede, 1984.

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